

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Imajo (U.S. Patent No. 4,989,146). However, for the reasons set forth hereinafter, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims which remain of record in this application distinguish over Imajo, whether considered by itself or in combination with other references.

In the vehicle break-down diagnosis and maintenance diagnosis system according to the invention, a "service center" or "service company" performs diagnosis to determine a malfunction in a vehicle, based on sensor information transmitted by an on-vehicle terminal. Estimates for maintenance are then requested to a plurality of service agencies (diagnosis and maintenance agencies), based on the result of the diagnosis and on the current position of the on-vehicle terminal. The responses to the request for estimates are then collected by the service company and transmitted, together with position information regarding the location of the respective maintenance agencies, to the on-vehicle terminal.

The on-vehicle terminal displays the maintenance agency information corresponding to the received estimates, in order to permit the user to select a maintenance agency to perform the necessary maintenance work. When the user selects a maintenance agency, the on-vehicle terminal displays navigation

information, providing instructions for traveling to the selected maintenance agency. Thus, based on the information provided, the user can select a preferred maintenance agency by himself, and is not limited to the closest agency.

Imajo discloses an automotive vehicle equipped with a memory device for storing operational condition data of a variety of sensors and actuators, and an acoustic coupler by which the memorized content of the memory device is transmitted via a telephone line to a large computer for trouble diagnosis. Therefore, in the event that the driver foresees the occurrence of automotive trouble based on the information displayed by a trouble warning device, or that the vehicle is in bad condition, the memorized content stored in the memory device is transmitted to the large computer installed at the head office of the service firm, for diagnosis of the automotive trouble, specifying a trouble arising and necessary replacement parts in real-time, utilizing the automotive telephone or the public telephone, before the vehicle is driven into the service facility. Accordingly, the vehicle can be driven into the nearest service facility having the necessary replacement parts in stock, so that the repair may be completed within a short time.

As noted previously, in the system according to the invention, alternative repair and maintenance facility information is displayed to the driver, permitting the driver himself to select the preferred maintenance agency based on his individual preferences. This latter feature of the invention is recited in

each of the independent claims currently of record in this application. In particular, Claim 2, for example, recites that an estimate for maintenance from the respective diagnosis and maintenance agency is displayed to the driver, and that the user selection of a diagnosis and maintenance agency from among the several diagnosis and maintenance agencies, is received "for displaying navigation information for travel to the selected diagnosis and maintenance agency, based on position information of the selected diagnosis and maintenance agency". Claims 3 and 7 are similarly limited, while Claim 12 recites that the server system sends information concerning the maintenance agency to the vehicle.

The Office Action indicates that Imajo discloses that the "driver selects the maintenance agency by selecting the closest agency". However, as can be seen from the brief description of Imajo set forth above, while Imajo discloses selection of the nearest service facility having the necessary replacement parts in stock, the user or driver is not permitted to arbitrarily select the service facility or maintenance agency from among displayed candidates, for which information is provided. In addition, Imajo also fails to teach or suggest providing navigation information for travel to the selected maintenance agency. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims of record in this application distinguish over Imajo.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application should be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #056207.50333C1).

Respectfully submitted,



Gary R. Edwards
Registration No. 31,824

CROWELL & MORING LLP
Intellectual Property Group
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844
GRE:kms
369275v1